

Speech by H.E. Mr Marc Pecsteen de Buytsverve,  
Ambassador, Permanent Representative

to the United Nations Security Council

Yemen – Briefing

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Mr President, I would like to thank Special Envoy Martin Griffiths, Under-Secretary-General Mark Lowcock and UNICEF Executive Director Henrietta Fore, for their presentation.

We welcome the **start of the redeployment** of Houthi troops from the ports of Hodeidah, Salif and Ras Issa and call on all parties to fully implement the withdrawal agreement and resolve any remaining areas of disagreement. It is essential that more observers join UNMHA and that UNVIM is able to establish a presence in the port.

We continue to call on all parties to implement the **Stockholm Agreement** in its entirety.

We welcome the new discussions that took place under the aegis of the United Nations earlier this week between the official government and the Houthis on the **redistribution of the revenues from the three ports of Hodeidah mentioned above**. This is in line with the provisions of the Stockholm Agreement.

Although we are only witnessing the beginning of the implementation of the Hodeidah Agreement, Belgium encourages the Special Envoy to continue preparing for the **next steps in the political process**. The Hodeidah Agreement is of particular importance to the humanitarian situation, but the core of the conflict requires a sustainable and inclusive political solution.

**Violence** continues in the rest of the country and aggravates the lack of trust between the parties. This violence also has an impact on **access to humanitarian aid**. We call on all parties to exercise restraint.

Efforts are required to **improve the humanitarian situation** which, as we have heard, remains **catastrophic**. We commend the humanitarian agencies on their outstanding work despite the difficulties. It is essential that all parties facilitate the access of humanitarian aid and respect international humanitarian law. **UNICEF** Executive Director Henrietta Fore's presentation shows that children are the main victims of the conflict. As Chair of the Working Group on **Children and Armed Conflict**, we look forward to the report on Yemen and will facilitate the negotiation of the conclusions on the basis of the report. We ask Special Envoy Griffiths to ensure that child protection measures are at the heart of any peace process.

Similarly, we would like to urge all parties to the armed conflict to respect their obligations and commitments under **international human rights law** and to provide the **Group of Eminent International and Regional Experts** established by the Human Rights Council with full cooperation and all necessary access facilities to enable an effective and independent investigation.

Thank you.